

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please amend the Claims as follows:

Please cancel Claims 1 and 15 without prejudice.

Claim 12, line 1 change "1" to - - 21 - - .

Claim 13, line 1 change "1" to - - 21 - - .

Claim 16, line 1 change "1" to - - 21 - - .

Claim 18, line 7 after "an" insert - - inner radius frame section including an; line 8 after  
"an" - - outer radius frame section, including an - - .

Please add the following claims:

21. | In combination with an air handling system of a heating, ventilating and air conditioning system, including a supply duct, a diffuser and a length of flexible hose interconnecting same and including an arcuate bend, the improvement of a sleeve assembly which comprises:

- a) first and second ends;
- b) a passage extending between and open at said ends, said passage selectively receiving the length of flexible duct;
- c) a frame generally conforming to the exterior shape of the flexible duct and including first and second frame sections; and
- d) a frame fastener for securing said first and second frame sections together with the length of flexible duct located in said passage.

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22.20 (Claim 15 rewritten in independent form).

A sleeve for a length of flexible duct, which comprises:

- a) first and second ends;
- b) a passage extending between and open at said ends, said passage selectively receiving the length of flexible duct;
- c) a frame generally conforming to the exterior shape of the flexible duct and including first and second frame sections;
- d) a frame fastener for securing said first and second frame sections together with the length of flexible duct located in said passage;
- e) a frame having a longitudinal axis extending between said sleeve ends and a curved configuration curving through an angle in the range of approximately 15 degrees to 180 degrees;
- f) said sleeve ends lie in respective planes generally perpendicular to said sleeve axis;
- g) said frame including said first and second end rings located at said sleeve first and second ends respectively and an intermediate ring located intermediate said first and second end rings;
- h) a plurality of longitudinal members extending between and connecting said rings, said longitudinal members extending in generally parallel relation with respect to said longitudinal axis;
- i) said ring comprises a pair of ribs, each said rib being located in a respective frame section;
- j) a plurality of loops each mounted on a respective rib of a respective end ring; and

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